

FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

Philadelphia Sabbath Association.

The Anniversary exercises were held on Sabbath Evening, March 2, 1856, at the First Dutch Reformed Church, Spring Garden Street. They were attended by a crowded audience, giving grateful evidence that the interest in the cause of Sabbath sanctification is not losing its hold on Philadelphia Christians.

After the introductory services,—the Divine Benediction upon the Society and cause having been fervently implored by Rev. Dr. McDowell,—a statement of the proceedings of the Association the past year was presented by its efficient General Agent, Rev. JEREMIAH MILLER.

The Annual Sermon before the Society was then delivered by the Rev. A. A. WILLITS from those remarkable words of the Holy Spirit recorded in Isaiah 58: 13–14, which, while they recognize the Sabbath as of perpetual obligation, also give an enduring promise of blessing upon its faithful observance.

“If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:

Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord, and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken *it*.”

The exposition by Mr. Willits of the benignity of the divine appointment of the day of holy rest, as an institution full of blessing to man was singularly happy and impressive, and we rejoice in the belief that the hands of the friends of the Sabbath have been greatly strengthened by his eloquent advocacy of its claims.

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REPORT.

It should justly be regarded by the Managers of our benevolent institutions a privilege highly to be valued when they may meet their patrons in stated annual assemblages, mutually to rejoice over the successes of the past and to gather fresh hopes for the future. In our case, there are many, and those among the earliest and firmest friends of our Society, for whose personal attendance upon such occasions, we can scarcely hope. They are scattered through the broad districts of Pennsylvania, and we embrace the opportunity of communication presented by this Report, to tender our cordial greeting to all our fellow helpers in this blessed cause and to express our thanks for their gifts and our trust they have not been bestowed in vain.

As heretofore, the operations of the Association, during the past year, have had respect to two branches of labor.

First. The promotion of the cause of the Sabbath generally.

Second. The Missionary work upon our Canals.

A large portion of the time of our faithful General Agent, Rev. J. MILLER, is devoted to the first of these objects, in connexion with the discharge of his duty of collecting funds and superintending the labors of the Missionaries. These engagements have led him to visit many of the most important points of influence in the State, and have furnished valuable opportunities for addresses from the pulpit and elsewhere, as well as for the diffusion of appropriate publications, by which we have reason to believe he has been instrumental in advancing the great cause in which we are engaged. In this work he has met with much favor, the evidence of which is shown by the cheerful readiness with which the Christian public has furnished the necessary means to sustain the operations of the Society. It is particularly gratifying to remark that in the neighborhood of the public improvements,—where there are the largest

opportunities of judging of the value and results of the efforts of the Association—there have been found the most friendly manifestations of interest and ready co-operation in its behalf. For the kind reception and numerous instances of personal kindness the General Agent has received from the friends of the cause wherever he has directed his steps, he desires through the Board of Managers, to offer his grateful acknowledgements.

The Missionary work upon the canals, is still one of great and absorbing interest. It will be seen by the reports, which are hereto appended, and to which we solicit the attention of our patrons, that five of the Missionaries have been employed upon these great highways of trade and travel, and there is no other provision for the religious instruction of the thousands of boatmen, than what this Association supplies. For aught that appears, this charge will continue to be laid upon us and in some respects with an increasing weight of responsibility. The locks being now closed on the Lord's day, there is an accumulation of the hands at the several points; which while it presents choice opportunities for bringing to bear upon their minds the great truths of religion, will, if neglected, multiply temptations to disorder and sin.

In reviewing the labors of the Missionaries for the past season, we have every reason to feel assured that they have been zealous and faithful in discharging the duties assigned to them. Their narrations should awaken gratitude to God who has disposed so many to listen to the word of life, and has led some, as we trust, to embrace the offers of salvation through a Redeemer.

As it respects the external observance of the Sabbath upon the public works of our State and neighborhood, we have no unfavorable changes to announce; while on the other hand, we would gratefully record that upon two more of our lines of internal commerce the day has been redeemed from previous desecration. Since our last report, the Schuylkill Navigation Company in compliance with the petitions of the boatmen, have closed their locks the entire day, and the same regulation has been adopted upon the Delaware and Raritan Canal, which passing across New Jersey unites the waters of Pennsylvania with those of New York. The time fixed by the Legislature for suspension of labor on the latter canal, was the *Fourth of July*. "I went" says the Missionary, "among the boatmen in May, and found the almost universal complaint or question. 'Why is not the law enforced immediately.'

The morning of that first Sabbath on which the boats lay still, was the brightest morning that ever dawned on these waters. Before, all was noise and confusion, so that most of the Boatmen scarce seemed to think it was the Sabbath, except when reminded of it, by the sight of people neatly clad, and on their way to the sanctuary of God, and then they would think of themselves, and feeling ashamed would long for the passing of the Sabbath law." Numerous petitions were signed by the Boatmen for the passage of the regulation, and it is stated that some of the individual members of the company exerted themselves nobly in its behalf.

The Hudson River Rail Road Company, has also discontinued all Sabbath trains.

The importance of these changes is not to be estimated merely by the benefits conferred upon the employees and the population along the lines. Every Rail Road or Canal, over which a sanctified Sabbath spreads its peace and quietness, is, by the contrast it exhibits, an emphatic rebuke to others, upon which the hurry of business is pressing on, regardless of the commandment of God ; and its silent example is working with efficiency and power. With the closing of the locks of the Schuylkill Navigation, has ceased the last authorized desecration of the Christian Sabbath upon the Canals of Pennsylvania, which are under the control of the State or its citizens ;—never we trust, again to be renewed,—and all this in accordance, not only with the earnest wishes of the thousands of those employed upon these extensive inland waters, but with the unforced, unmistakeable approbation of the community. Here, then is a way-mark in the advancement of the cause, which we may contemplate with mingled feelings of encouragement and thankfulness.

With respect to the Rail Roads, there have been two instances in the interior, of discontinuance upon the Sabbath from experience of pecuniary loss. That the systematic violation of the commandment of God, involved in the prosecution of business upon these roads is, in the main, unprofitable as well as sinful, we doubt not, and as this fact becomes increasingly manifest with the progress of light and truth these violations will cease. There is no pretence that they are continued now but for the sake of the gains, which it is hoped they may bring to the companies which authorize them.

Our Ice companies with a single exception, made no deliveries on the Sabbath during the last summer, but we have no such favorable

report to present of the City Bakers. In perhaps, one half the establishments, the journeymen are still held to their hard bondage. To furnish supplies of newly baked bread—an article pronounced by all intelligent physicians as well as by common observation, exceedingly pernicious to health—requires the labor of most of the previous night, and thus the hour which upon the forenoon of each returning Sabbath assembles their friends and neighbors fresh from repose for the worship of God, finds them weary and exhausted by toil and unprepared in mind or body for the appropriate duties of the day. We would plead in favor of this suffering class with all Christian men and women in whose hands this publication may chance to fall. Especially would we place before them in full light the important fact that the hopes of the Journeymen for relief, rest wholly upon the customers of their employers. They have sought to the Master Bakers and to the Legislature in vain. Many of the employers would gladly comply with their request, but for apprehension of loss of custom. Our space will not allow us to dwell upon the inference from these facts as it bears upon heads of families in our city, but we would press upon their consideration whether the responsibility for the continuance of this great wrong rests, with heavier weight, upon those who labor or upon those who encourage and exact it.

The Sabbath question has lately assumed an importance in Europe, unknown for centuries. In the Protestant Churches on the continent where great laxity in the habits even of professing Christians has unhappily existed, there is every indication of more scriptural views of this blessed institution; while, in England, a contest of two years upon an attempt to throw open places of public amusement has been signally defeated by an overwhelming majority in Parliament.

The contest will go on. The hallowed observance of the Sabbath is too closely connected with the salvation of the souls of men and the general advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom in our fallen world, to escape the assaults of his enemies.—But although the conflict may yet be arduous and protracted, the truth will triumph. With the increase of a purer christianity, this divine institution will stand out in its more full and glorious proportions, and be seen, like all the gifts of God, to be one of infinite love and mercy to our race.

JOHN A. BROWN, *President.*

Philadelphia, March 3, 1856.

DELAWARE DIVISION AND LEHIGH CANALS.

We introduce to the reader the report of Rev. William Hance, whose field embraces a line of canal 132 miles in length and 7,000 souls, among whom he has distributed the past year 80,000 pages of tracts, with very cheering evidence of usefulness. He has labored for the Society twelve seasons, and the Holy Spirit has crowned his efforts with marked success.

EASTON, DEC. 19, 1855.

REV. J. MILLER:—In looking back upon the labors of another season, for the spiritual good of the boatmen, on the Delaware Division and Lehigh Canals, we rejoice to say the blessing of God is still manifested on the work. Not only a decided improvement in their morals is perceptible in comparison with former years, but souls have been converted and made happy in Christ Jesus. Let the facts speak.

A young man came up to me and took my hand, and while tears of joy stood in his eyes, said "Mr. Hance I am glad to see you now, I have given my heart to the Lord and feel that he loves me; I used to think you could do no good among us boatmen; but when I reflected upon the reason of your laboring so much among us for our good, it made me think of my own condition, and thus I was led on until, as it were, I was constrained to give my heart to God, and now I want you to pray for me that I may be kept faithful."

Another young man asked me if I had the tract called "Heaven Lost," he said I had given him that one last summer, it had been the means of his awakening and conversion; he had lent the tract to another boatman who was also awakened and was now seeking religion; they had worn the tract out by continued use, and were anxious to obtain another copy.

Another one whom I had before found desiring the "pearl of great price," is now rejoicing in hope of the glory of God; I found him much interested for the salvation of an only sister.

A father one day remarked that I had been the means of rescuing his son from a drunkard's life.

In this connection I may also remark that there is an eminent minister of the gospel now faithfully engaged in preaching Christ,

who was awakened in his boyhood days while he was taking an occasional trip as a driver-boy on the tow path. A little tract was placed in his hand by a stranger and a few words were spoken that proved the "good seed sown on good ground," bringing forth fruit to the glory of God.

On a Sabbath morning a boatman in accepting a tract, said that he wanted one to hit hard and *make* him feel it. In conversing with him I found him deeply convicted, and I believe earnestly seeking religion. He felt, as he said, that the canal was a hard place for one to obtain that blessing, but he remarked "indeed I cannot think of losing my soul or of living without religion."

On another boat I found the captain under strong convictions. He said his heart was so hard that he could not feel as he thought he must in reference to his sinful state; but as he made this remark his eyes were filled with tears; I pointed him to Jesus as his Saviour. He exclaimed "Oh, if I could only cast myself on him; but my heart is so hard and I am surrounded by so many trials that I can hardly believe he will save me unless I leave the canal." The scene was solemn; we were surrounded by others, irreligious boatmen, but all bowed the knee in the cabin of the boat while we supplicated the Throne of grace in his and their behalf.

But space will not permit me to mention every individual case. Suffice it to say I have met quite a number more or less under exercise of mind on the great question of their soul's salvation.

To show how a word dropped in season may be received I will relate a few other incidents.

A captain becoming enraged at his driver, swore most dreadfully; I told him his was a very hard and wicked prayer. At first he was disposed to be offended, but I reasoned with him, and asked him if he would like his prayer answered in regard to his driver; he seemed then somewhat to realize the greatness of his crime, as he immediately exclaimed, with much feeling, "Oh sir, I never thought of it in that way, I am sure I do not want him or any one else damned, I never saw it in that light before, I must break off from such a wicked practice!"

A driver-boy having seen in the hand of another, the tract "Blaspheming Sailor reclaimed," came running after me and asked if I could give him one of the same kind. I conversed with him; he was in the habit of hearing others around him swear and had become a swearer himself, but somehow he could not think it right, and now said he "I will stop it, for I know it is very wrong to wish any one sent to hell." He asked for and I gave him a Testament; he said he had not had much of an opportunity to read it before, but now as he had one of his own he would try to read it with attention.

While reasoning with an Irish Roman Catholic on the subject of personal holiness, he became much interested and exclaimed "I wish I enjoyed the same religion you do, sir, for I am sure it must be right or it could not produce such effects," but he thought it would be very hard to maintain a walk of piety while on the canal.

I still have much encouragement in preaching to the boatmen. Generally upon the Sabbath morning I visit from boat to boat and supply them with tracts, and notify them of meeting to be held in the afternoon. I have visited as many as one hundred and fifty boats of a forenoon, and in the afternoon I have corresponding congregation or say two hundred and fifty. But as an average we may have fifty boats or about seventy-five boatmen and boys to whom we preach; thus we go out to the highways. Although we cannot always expect the strict decorum we would within the walls of a church, yet very seldom are we disturbed or annoyed, and frequently has there been a deep solemnity manifested; often at the close of these meetings have they lingered around the spot rendered sacred by services to our God with becoming reverence, and we could truly say God is here. To the most of them this is the only public means of grace they enjoy during the boating season, as they seldom are prepared with suitable change of raiment to appear with respectability in the various churches along the line. Hence they feel that the missionary is *their minister*. But not unfrequently are they induced through our invitations to enter the sanctuary and become attentive hearers of the word of life.

The amount of my tract distribution has been about 80,000 pages. In many cases they are highly prized by the boatmen; they are preserved, frequently carried home to their families and become a blessing to them; but above all they have been instrumental in the conversion of souls. Witness the case of the tract called "Heaven Lost," above related.

Many testaments have also been given to the driver-boys and a number of boats supplied with Bibles.

The canals I have labored on the past season (Delaware Division and Lehigh) form a chain of 132 miles long, upon which there are employed about 7000 men and boys. Of the men about one-third are foreigners, chiefly Irish Catholics; of the boys about one-fourth are orphans; others are fatherless with a widowed mother whom they assist with their earnings. We regret to say that the canal is also a place where the most vicious runaways are found, tired of parental restraint; they leave their homes, perhaps kind parents, affectionate brothers and sisters, and find a bad retreat among kindred spirits on the canals. Such is the field we occupy, such the character among whom we labor, "the lost sheep." Pray for us that we may win them to the fold of Christ.

Yours in the Gospel,

WM. HANCE.

NORTH AND WEST BRANCH CANALS.

The following report of Rev. S. Bacon, a missionary who has felt a special interest in the welfare of the driver-boys, embodies various incidents of a touching character, and cannot be read with indifference by parents. He has labored three seasons, and has left a decided mark for good on his important field.

HUNTINGTON, LUZERNE Co., Dec. 24, 1855.

REV. J. MILLER:—My field of missionary labor the past season has been from Williamsport to Pittston. I have met with a cordial reception from the boatmen, even more so than I anticipated, particularly from the *driver boys*. I shall present a number of facts which have greatly interested my mind, pertaining to these little fellows. They all seemed to know me, and frequently they would remind me of having given them tracts and testaments before, as from time to time we met together.

On the West Branch I walked out one Sabbath afternoon and found three boys playing marbles. I reminded them of the day. They said they meant no harm by it. I asked them if it would not be better to be reading? They replied that they had nothing to read. I said "Just sit down while I talk to you." I had their attention at once. I learned that they were *all* orphans. Necessity had driven them to the canal. I told them to be good boys, always do right, and they might be prepared to meet their dear parents in heaven. They wept. I gave them a good supply of tracts. Their feelings became deeply interested, and they were very grateful to find a friend under such circumstances. They gave me many thanks, and I left them reading.

In my Sabbath morning round at Wilkesbarre I found, in an old shed, F. R., a boy of fifteen years, currying his mules. "Good morning; dressing up your team for to-morrow?" said I. He looked up, apparently surprised that I had spoken to him. Having paused for a time, said I, "Now suppose we sit down on this pole, and you give me a little history of your life." The request was so strange and new he hardly could think what it meant. He then observed, in broken English, (which, from its artless simplicity, was the more affecting) that his parents came from Germany, stopped in Philadelphia, and were poor. They were Lutherans, and, by precept and example, had taught him to fear God and pray morning and evening. But three years ago his father died, and his last words to him were never to learn to swear or neglect to say his prayers. He proceeded, "A year and a half ago my mother died. But oh! my mother!" Here his feelings welled up, mocked control, anguish choked utterance, the unbidden tears fell like rain as he wiped them off with his long, coarse sleeve. "Oh! it was then I wanted to die, and go to heaven with my mother. I have wished that I had died then. I think it would have been better for me if I had died!" He sighed and wept, and wept and sighed, as

he waved to and fro. And then, with half smothered emotion, he added, "She told me, to the last moment, never to learn to swear, and then breathed her last." I have never failed to say my prayers night and morning. But having heard others swear, I have sometimes used bad language. But in a moment I would be sorry, and promise myself never to do it again, as I thought what father and mother said to me when dying. Last season I served a captain two months along here, and was taken sick. I walked till I could go no farther. I got upon the mule; the captain drove me off. I then asked him for my wages. He refused to give me anything; drove on, and left me penniless and ragged. There came along a boat; I asked the captain to take me aboard, which he did, and took pity on me, and carried me to Harrisburg. There he told the conductor my situation, who took me in the cars, and at midnight I found my poor sisters in Philadelphia. But this season it has gone better. My captain is kind and pays me. Yet, oh! if I could have died when my mother did!"

By this time there was quite a little group of driver-boys listening with deepest interest. I then told him to wipe away his tears, as they began to flow again, and cheer up. "I am sent here to do you all the good I can." And when I said, "I have tracts for you to read," every eye was upon me; and when I gave him some, every hand was stretched out, accompanied with "Please give me some." I gave him a testament, and wrote his name in it. When I left, he took my hand, and, holding on to it, he thanked me again and again, that he had found such a friend. I told them all to be good boys, and I think every lad wept there with their missionary.

I found a driver-boy crying one day as if his heart would break, because the rudder of his boat had been torn off by a rowdy boatman in the absence of *his* captain. I called him to me, told him how to manage, it was not so bad after all, and cheered him up. I talked with him, and pointed him to the Saviour as the Redeemer of his soul, and told him to be a good boy. And having given him some tracts, I left him cheerful and happy that he had found a friend.

At W. I conversed with a couple of driver-boys. One spoke of his mother with tears—said he had used bad language, but was sorry, and was resolved to be a good boy, and try and meet his dear mother in heaven. The other said I had been with them often, and had given them many tracts, and that he was glad to see me. Joy beamed from their eyes, and I left them reading.

Finding a driver sitting upon the stairs while the boat was being weighed, I asked him, "What wages do you get?" "Ten dollars a month." "What becomes of your money?" "I send every cent I can to my poor mother, to buy bread for the family of five children." He was an interesting boy. I gave him several tracts and a testament. The relation of this fact interested very much the people of B., who were acquainted with the family.

A boy of fifteen had lost both of his parents before he came to the canal, and said to me, "It always makes me feel sad when I

think of my mother. The good impressions she made upon my mind have never left me." Here he stopped, and burst into tears. Recovering he said, "For two days I have been sick. My captain is hard-hearted, and would not attend to me in the least—drove me out to work; what to do I don't know! I know I want to do right, and meet my good mother in heaven." I gave him something good to read. I afterwards the same day found him alone reading his Testament. It would have moved many a heart to sympathy, to see him weeping, and reading, and wiping away his tears, and then reading there all alone. For two days I found hardly a driver-boy who was not an orphan.

Our meetings for *preaching* have been well attended generally, and on no occasion has reproof been necessary. Seated upon the boats, on the banks and railroads, respectful congregations have listened to the word of life with deep interest. On one occasion one young man went away weeping, anxiously inquiring what he should do to be saved.

At W. a Catholic captain readily gave his boat for preaching on the Sabbath, while a large audience gave earnest heed to the word, and I was cordially invited to continue my services with them.

At N. it was particularly interesting. Not only the boatmen, but many town-people attended, who perhaps seldom attended the churches, and gave marked attention. A woman on a boat with her brother was much affected, resolved to seek the Lord and unite with some branch of the Church. They wished, if possible, to have preaching there every Sabbath. The boatmen often speak with delight of the good meetings they have at Columbia, where the missionary preaches to them from Sabbath to Sabbath.

In *personal religious conversation* with the boatmen I have been encouraged. Quite a number of them have been awakened to deep seriousness for their soul's salvation. *Tract distribution* has been signally blessed to their awaking to a sense of their guilt and danger, and to the earnest purpose to become Christians.

The rapid progress of moral reform among them as a result of the efforts of the Sabbath Association, especially on the North Branch, is conceded by all. Perhaps in no one enterprise of our fellow citizens, with the same amount of effort, has a greater change been effected for the better. And many people seem surprised when told that our society is the only institution that looks especially to the interests of thirty thousand upon our public improvements in Pennsylvania, and yet it is so. And while they are yearly increased, it is important that Christian sympathy and effort for their good should also be *increased*. In the Wyoming valley alone thirty additional companies have been formed the past season, designed for immediate operation. Without fear or shame I can commend the sustaining of this cause to a benevolent and Christian public.

Yours, in the bonds of love,

SEPTIMUS BACON.

SUSQUEHANNA CANAL.

A melancholy interest attaches to the following report. It was but a few weeks after giving this account of his labors, that Mr. Alcorn, at the early age of twenty-eight years, was called, as we trust, from service to reward—from earthly toils to heavenly rest. While walking in the streets, at Columbia, S. C., where he had gone to complete his studies which he had for two years pursued at Princeton, he fell and expired without a word.

This was the second season of his labors in the service of the Society. He was an able, earnest, faithful missionary of Jesus Christ.

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, PRINCETON, Oct. 20, 1855.

REV. J. MILLER:—My field of labor during the present season has been the Susquehanna canal, from Columbia to Northumberland. My mode of operation was to travel with the boatmen during the days of the week, distribute tracts and testaments, and converse with them concerning their souls' eternal welfare. On the Sabbath we always endeavored to be at some prominent point on the line where they were accustomed to assemble in the greatest numbers, and where your missionary could collect together quite a numerous audience to listen to the message of salvation as announced in their hearing, and on such occasions the attention and the interest manifested were of such a character that they cheered and gladdened the heart of your missionary, yea, they gave him great encouragement, to persevere with redoubled energy in his arduous but important labor of endeavoring to Christianize the boatmen on those great inland thoroughfares.

As every river has its rapids, its whirlpool, its eddies, as well as its smooth, placid surface, so the missionary on the canal has often in the course of his journeyings to come in contact with the Infidel the Atheist, the Universalist, as well as the humble professor of Christianity. Occasionally do we meet with those who scoff at the Bible and make a mock of religion. Some of them will reason the matter with you, while others, when you present them with some tracts or introduce the subject of religion, will curse you for an impostor and denounce your teachings as heterodox in the extreme. One day near Liverpool, I met a man who evidently had read the Bible at some time in his life, but at the time to which I refer he was a professed infidel, denying the doctrines contained in the word of God. After many assertions on his part in behalf of the doctrine which he advocated, and many quotations from the word of God on my part in proof of the doctrine which I maintained, we separated, but before doing so, he took me by the hand, and expressed the wish that we would soon meet again. What the result of that conversation may be it is for time alone to develop.

One Sabbath day near Clark's Ferry, I came up to a crowd of men who were listening to one of their number railing against the locks being closed on the Sabbath day. After he had got through his speech one of his listeners took the other side of the question and a warm dispute ensued. The friend of the Sabbath had the

best of the argument, but the first speaker almost silenced him by his cursing. At this point I interfered by quoting some texts of scripture, such as, "the Sabbath was made for man," "Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy," &c. After some further remarks on both sides, the man that would desecrate the Sabbath by following his daily avocations on that holy day, left the crowd fully convinced that he stood alone in the advocacy of his pernicious doctrine. I mention this fact to show that the boatmen, as a class, are in favor of observing the Sabbath.

Profane swearing is the more prominent vice among the boatmen; many of them still indulge in that wicked habit with all its soul-destroying tendency. A few, we are happy to state, have been reclaimed from its pernicious influence by the efforts of the missionaries. One day below Selinsgrove the tow-line of the packet unshipped the rudder of a boat which caused her to drift to the other side of the canal. The captain was considerably excited, but during the whole scene not a word of profanation escaped from his lips. After the excitement was over I had some conversation with him, and learned that he belonged to the Methodist Church, and that it was through the instrumentality of your missionaries that he was *first* led to reflect upon his sinful life. I asked him if he thought it were possible to abolish swearing among the boatmen! Yes, he said, it was, but rum must first be abolished, for that was the great motive power to swearing.

At another time, stepping upon a boat directed by colored men, I was somewhat surprised to find that even in their excitement they never uttered an oath. The captain was asked, "Have you no swearing men on board?" "No sir, I would not employ a man that would swear." What a noble example does this sable son of Africa present! It ought to put white men to the blush.

The *driver-boys* on the canal are a very important class and well worthy our serious attention and best endeavors. Many of them are growing up in ignorance of God, of Christ and the way of salvation, and yet in all probability those are the very characters that will in a few years become the boatmen on the canals. You then see how essential it is for the missionary to devote his time and energy to those dear, but uncared-for youths. One day at Harrisburg, I stepped upon a boat, and after some conversation with the hands, I asked the driver boy if he had a testament; he answered "No." I asked him if he could read; he informed me that he could. I then proffered him a testament on condition that he would read it when he had time. He promised to do so. Here the Captain interfered and said that "there was no use in giving him a testament for he would not read it;" the boy replied that he would read it if he would give him time; the Captain promised him time, and the boy agreed to read. I visited the boat afterwards and found that both had kept their promise.

I have only to add that I was kindly received by the boatmen in general; and trusting that the endeavors put forth by your missionaries this season may be the means of awakening many souls to a sense of duty,

I remain yours in Christian bonds,

WILLIAM ALCORN.

SUSQUEHANNA AND JUNIATA CANALS.

This was the first season of Mr. Gamble. It will be seen that he felt the usual degree of discouragement for a short time; but being assured by one who had had experience for eight years in the work, that if he would persevere, through the love of Christ, in efforts for their good, his labors would be appreciated by the boatmen, and he might expect cordial encouragement. His report verifies the truthfulness of the assurance. Indeed his meetings at Columbia were spoken of up on the North Branch by the boatmen in glowing terms of delight.

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, OCT. 17, 1855.

REV. J. MILLER:—The field of labor assigned me was the canal between Columbia and Hollidaysburg. As there were few boats running on the Juniata branch I spent most of my time in the portion below the junction, which was literally crowded with boats.

Before entering upon the work I greatly feared that it would be impossible to get the boatmen to listen to a conversation on the subject of religion. But it was not so on my field. On the contrary a disposition, and in some instances an eagerness, for religious truth was manifested. This was truly encouraging; as in the case of a captain whom I found anxiously inquiring what he should do to be saved. He said, "I have renounced my former wicked ways, and am endeavoring to lead a better life." It was pleasant to point that inquiring soul to Jesus for mercy and salvation. Though he did not appear to see his way very clearly, yet I trust the conversation I had with him was not in vain.

Some of the boatmen, no doubt, are hardy enough for any act of desperation, yet there are others who evidently are followers of the meek and lowly Jesus. If, as a result of all our toils and prayers and self-denial, only one soul be brought home to the Saviour, it will amply repay. Yet there are undoubtedly numbers of whom eternity will reveal that they have been saved through the conversation and the preaching and the prayers of the Canal Missionaries. I have often seen men who gave the most earnest heed to the word spoken, and who apparently were really impressed with the importance of the truths made known, concerning whom it would be difficult to say whether or not the truth had taken a permanent hold upon their minds, owing to the fact that I seldom, if ever, afterwards had an opportunity of conversing with them.

To show that the labors of the missionary are appreciated, I shall mention some facts. On my first Sabbath at Columbia, I addressed a very attentive audience in the afternoon. After the meeting was over I gave a tract to each one present. The tracts were read with interest; and one of the men asked me if I "would not come and

talk to them the next Sunday, as they had no way of going to church. After some conversation I told him my object, and by whom I was sent out. He replied, "It was very thoughtful in the Sabbath Association to send any one to them." "*We boatmen*" it is often said, "*are looked down upon by most people.*" Having first conversed with a young man on a boat, upon the subject of religion, I gave him a tract. He read it for a time, and came to me, saying, with deep emotion, "I could not read that tract through for five dollars." He went on to say that he had been a member of the Presbyterian church, but was not in the way of his duty, as he had not been to church for five or six of the previous Sabbaths. I reminded him of the temptations he would have to encounter, and exhorted him to do his duty. He then resumed his reading the tract which had aroused his slumbering conscience.

By reason of a break which brought together a large number of boats, I had access to many in distributing tracts and conversing on religious matters. A boatman came and asked me for some tracts, adding that he would go down into the cabin and read them. Another said he always liked to read what was good, and spoke in glowing terms of the tract, "My son give me thine heart," which had been given him by a former missionary. Another said he could not read himself, but asked me to do it for him, as he always liked to hear them read. I accordingly read one, to which he listened with marked attention. A young man to whom I gave some tracts, which he eagerly seized, said he had been a member of the Methodist church, but had been drawn from the right path by coming on the canal. In our conversation I expostulated with him against his sinful course, and exhorted him to a holy life. He feelingly said he was sorry for his past conduct, and added, "I have not prospered since I forsook the service of God." I urged upon him the importance of immediate repentance, telling him that God was willing to receive the returning sinner. As we parted, his last words were "*I will try to do better.*"

I embrace every opportunity of conversing with the *driver-boys*, to whom particular attention ought to be given. Happening to meet a second time one of these little fellows, to whom I had given tracts on a former occasion, he asked me for some more, stating that he had read the others through and through. To the inquiry, "I suppose you do not often get good advice," he replied, "Your tracts were the first good advice I ever got."

But what encouraged me more than anything else, was the Sabbath meetings for making known to these sons of toil "the unsearchable riches of Christ." I cannot give a full description of them. No. It is necessary that one should be present in order to realize the impressiveness of the scene. True, there was no covering above us, save the canopy of heaven, and none beneath, save the timbers of the sturdy boats; yet undoubtedly God was just as present there as in the most costly building. For the "Most High dwelleth not alone in temples made with hands," but "Heaven is

his throne, and the earth is his footstool." There might be seen seated around the speaker those in the vigor of youth who had, alas, given too much of their time to Satan. There, too, might be seen the man of more advanced years, who, it was to be feared, had given his best days to the service of the enemy. There, likewise, might be observed the professed follower of Christ, who had need of the comfort and consolation of God's word to enable him to resist the temptations which beset him on the right hand and on the left, but who, perhaps, for a number of Sabbaths has not had an opportunity of hearing the Gospel's joyful sound. These all have invariably behaved in the most orderly manner, and given the most profound attention to the word spoken. The audience sometimes was one hundred and fifty or more in number, and yet on no occasion have I witnessed any tendency to levity or disorder.

These meetings upon the Sabbath have been refreshing seasons to the missionary as well as to the boatmen. And even on a week-day evening, in connection with the break already referred to, I thought it desirable to give them a discourse, as some of them seemed very anxious to have preaching, and I felt that probably I might never have such a favorable opportunity of meeting so large a number again. After I had addressed a large, quiet, and very attentive audience, the boatmen came forward and received tracts until my supply was exhausted. And I was still *more* encouraged on the Sabbath following, at our meeting.

May the Sabbath Association successfully hold on its useful course. And may the Lord put it into the hearts of his people to sympathise more deeply, and give more liberally to the support of this glorious cause, that sin and iniquity may have a perpetual end, and righteousness and truth may everywhere prevail.

Yours, in the bonds of the Gospel,

ROBERT GAMBLE.

SCHUYLKILL CANAL.

Mr. McElwee, for his first season of missionary labor, took the Schuylkill Canal from Philadelphia to Port Carbon. Though dark and trying to his faith, this field, embracing 3,000 souls, he found susceptible of good influence. The power of Christian sympathy and Gospel truth did not fail to appear, as is evident from the following report.

PHILADELPHIA, Oct. 29, 1855.

REV. JEREMIAH MILLER:—My field of labor during the months of May, June, July, and part of August, was along the Schuylkill Canal, from Philadelphia to Pottsville. This being entirely a new

field of operation, and myself its first permanent missionary, the report from *it* will not exhibit, perhaps, a series of facts as encouraging as those which greet you from other fields of your missionary enterprise.

As to the state in which I found upwards of three thousand human beings, let these boatmen themselves be your informers. No sooner had I entered on my labors, and made known my mission from boat to boat, than invariably I was met with the reply, "There is no use in your coming here to try to do any good among us." Then when the importance of considering the subject of their own personal salvation was urged as a sufficient warrant why such a work should be undertaken, the reply was, and that too, in almost all cases, accompanied with a horrid oath, "What do *we* care about such things? Here we have been from the time we were little fellows; we have grown up to be men on this very canal; we have never heard a prayer offered, a sermon preached, a Bible read; in one word, we have been living like the brute, caring for nobody, for nothing good, and nobody caring for us."

This is not all—no, nor even a very small fraction of what might be laid before the Association, in relation to the character of the material on which your missionary labors were to take effect. I admit that there are a few exceptions to the above, but comparatively they are very few indeed. Now, among a class of men feeling as these men felt, and, in many instances, believing themselves the outcast of God and abandoned of men, the great question and indeed the great difficulty which presented itself to your missionary was, how shall he best direct his efforts to accomplish the most good; shall he commence and preach the Gospel to them just wherever and whenever he meets them? So did your missionary. And although it may be considered preaching on a small scale, still it is an humble sowing of that seed on which the blessing is promised; and which, though sown in tears and in trembling, lest the enemy sow tares, or snatch away that which is sown, before it germinates, still, relying on the promise, we hope that God will cause sheaves to be brought back with rejoicing.

I add a few facts which may be regarded as a fair specimen of a large number which time forbids to mention.

One boatman asked me to give a name to his new boat. I wrote out "The Missionary's Friend, from Port Union." After asking what *missionary* meant, on being told, he seemed very much pleased with the idea, remarking, at the same time, that the very name (Missionary) might save him some dollars of fines which boatmen have to pay, by their boats damaging locks or bridges; and besides this, says he, "Good people will respect me for being favorable to a good cause." And then again he says, as though impelled by contrary motives, "The other boatmen will laugh at me, and call me Christian." "Well," says he at last, "let them laugh; it's a good idea, a good cause; poor fellows, they need somebody among them to *make* them good."

Says a little fellow one day, "Missionary don't you mind I met you away up at the coal mines one day, a week ago? You gave me a Testament, and I read it all through in a day or two, and now I want one for the bowsman; for I want to keep my own always with me." About a month after this I heard of the poor little fellow's death, and I cannot help but hope, nay, believe, that that Testament gave him light through the "dark valley of the shadow of death."

One Sabbath morning, near the Wire Bridge, the tide was so high that I could not reach the boatmen. I called to some of them, and told them I had some tracts and Testaments for them, but did not know how to get to them. Upon which, one of the number came through the water and took them, and returned and distributed them with a perseverance and energy truly gratifying.

As I shook hands with a young man, an orphan, and was about leaving his boat, and expressing my deep anxiety that his soul might be saved, "God bless you," says he, while the heart heaved, and the tear glistened in the eye, "I have been fifteen years without father or mother, with none to care for me, and all this time nobody ever told me *that* before."

But why multiply facts like these? Is it at all necessary that the individual Christian or the Church of Christ should be furnished with a long list of facts, in order that they may be roused up to duty, and make a little effort to save souls just dying at the very door? No! no! The spirit of genuine Christianity waits for no such thing. It should be enough for us to know that souls are perishing, and that there is a possibility of saving them—that there are men willing to go and make the trial, saying to her, "Here am I; send me."

Very truly yours, in the Gospel of Christ,

WM. McELWEE.

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA.

Mr. W. Thompson has been employed the past three years by the Association, to labour on the Sabbath at the Railroad Depots, and among the boatmen on the Schuylkill. He presents some facts of a painful character to those who hail the Sabbath as "the Holy of the Lord." It is especially a matter of grief, that trains on the Lord's day should receive patronage from any who profess to be the friends of the Saviour. His report is commended to the serious consideration of the Christian public.

REV. J. MILLER:—The work in which I am engaged on the behalf of your society, furnishes a wide field for the exercise of faith and hope. When we see a train of cars, with its freight of immortal beings, about to start from our depots, we, for the most part, look upon faces which we have never before seen, and which we never expect to behold again; we feel our hearts swelling with intense desire that the little tract which we present each one, may be a sword in the hands of the Spirit, by which the enmity of their hearts may be slain.

The fact of their travelling on the Sabbath, is to our mind, conclusive evidence, that they are not the friends of Christ; that they are strangers to that reverence for God, and his laws, which distinguishes the people of God from the world.

In this travelling, however, painful exceptions are occasionally to be met with. We may see mingling in this crowd of Sabbath breakers, some who are known to your Missionary, as the professed followers of Christ. Even some bearing a commission to preach his Gospel are to be met with. One said to me, as he was about to enter the car, "I am in a difficulty, I was called upon to preach some distance in the country, I had no means of getting out then, and I must go now or they must do without preaching."

Another said, "I am going out to fill my appointments to preach. I forgot to bring a supply of tracts; will you please give me what you have left, after you are done distributing." On last Sabbath a lady well known to me, (a member of one of our churches) entered the car; when she discovered she was seen by me, she displayed so much confusion and embarrassments in her endeavors to conceal her face from me that I turned away, thus affording her an opportunity to muffle her face in a thick veil.

The truth is, the distribution of tracts in the cars, is understood by the majority as a rebuke for their violation of the Sabbath. Remarks are made by some, clearly showing this; we frequently hear such expressions as, "this is opposed to Sunday travelling." Some receive the tracts with expressions of gratitude and thanks, some ask for more than one, others take my package and select such as they choose; it being very seldom the tracts are declined when offered.

I am careful to select such tracts as bear upon the observance of the Sabbath, or such as are addressed to impenitent sinners. The package is so assorted that no two tracts of the same name shall be together. Thus Sabbath after Sabbath in my attendance at the West Chester and Media depots, I find the same routine, with nothing to distinguish one Sabbath from another, except in the number of passengers.

Much the greater part of my labors have been among the boatmen on the Schuylkill. As a class they are exceedingly diversified. You occasionally meet with a sincere Christian with his heart full

of good wishes for the cause in which you are engaged. On entering his cabin you find him observing the sanctity of the Sabbath. You see there, his Bible and numerous tracts received from time to time of the various missionaries that have visited his boat. The moment you look upon his countenance you see the marks of devine grace, he rejoices in the work in which you are engaged, and bids you God speed.

In many of the boats, I find the Captain's wife, mistress of his cabin. It is a pleasure to see the neatness and order of such cabins, with her little children around her, with a countenance to welcome me, she receives my tracts with pleasure. Said the Captain of a fine boat, as I entered the cabin and found himself and wife already prepared for church, "where is the nearest church? We are at a loss where to go, but we mean to go out and look up a church." I told him where to go, and offered him some tracts. He turned to his wife and said, "my wife will be glad of your visit, for she wants some tracts." She immediately urged me to give her as many as I could spare, that she might have some to distribute among the rest of the boatmen.

I am glad to find that the number of boats in which the Captain's family accompany him, is on the increase. This is pleasant on account of the superior order of things on such boats, but more especially for the favorable reception that the missionary meets with in his visits for their spiritual good.

However much the larger number of boats are manned with men and boys exceedingly rude and ignorant. Very many of them, (especially the boys) know not how to read and have no religious instruction whatever. With some who could read I found books of a very corrupting character. I found no difficulty in getting them to take tracts, except a few Catholics. In personal conversation with that class on the subject of religion, I could obtain but few replies to my questions; however, they would hear respectfully what I had to say.

I made it a point to ascertain if they carried a copy of the Scriptures, and if they did not I offered them a copy of the New Testament, provided they would take care of it and read it; I thus distributed a number of copies.

Yours &c.

WILLIAM THOMPSON.

COLLECTIONS OF PHILADELPHIA SABBATH ASSOCIATION,

From Feb. 15, 1855, to Feb. 15, 1856.

COUNTRY.			
Carlisle Pres chs	\$27 75	Muncy M E ch	3 96
N and S Hampton Ref Dutch ch	27 70	Selinsgrove Luth ch	6 23
Jersey Shore Pres ch	23 50	A Blymire	1 00
“ M E and Bap chs	8 88	G B Kunkel	1 00
	32 38	Mrs Wallace	2 00
Mifflintown Luth ch	7 40	Caleb Wheeler	5 00
“ M E ch	4 82	Rev N A Keyes	5 00
“ Pres ch	10 35	Samuel Black	2 50
	22 57	Mrs Ann Black	2 00
Pottsville Ass Ref Pres ch	20 00	Rev C P Wing	1 00
“ Eng Luth ch in pt	8 00	Mrs McPherson	2 00
“ Individuals	32 50	A Buruett	1 00
	60 50	Kesler Bro	} 4 00
Milroy Pres ch in pt	12 92	Watson & Wagner	
Espytown St John's Luth-		David Stephenson	1 00
eran ch in pt	6 25	Robert Wilson	1 00
“ Private donations	8 37	Boatman	37
	14 62		28 87
Bloomsburg Pres ch in pt	22 50	Shirleysburg, J Brewster	80 00
“ Individuals	8 25	“ Individuals	5 50
	30 75		85 50
Midway M E ch	7 33	Mt Joy	26 38
Coatesville Pres ch in pt	8 00	McEwensville	10 52
Chilisquaque Pres ch in pt	10 85	Strasburg	8 40
Lewisburg M E ch	2 50	Marietta in pt	14 00
“ Individuals	49 25	Wrightsville	13 00
	51 75	York, Mr & Mrs S Small	15 00
Huntingdon Bap ch	7 84	“ C A Morris	5 00
“ Individuals	32 50	“ P A Small	5 00
	40 34	“ Individuals	8 50
Danville Pres cong	38 91		33 50
“ E Luth ch	8 62	Penningtonville, Individuals,	1 47
	47 53	Easton	153 75
Middletown Bethel ch	5 90	Milton in pt	25 60
Tamaqua First Pres ch	25 50	Hollidaysburg	48 00
“ Primitive Meth ch	4 67	Lewistown, Individuals,	17 50
“ Individuals	8 75	Mauch Chunk,	
	38 92	“ Chas G Rockwood	5 00
Lambertville M E ch	3 47	“ E A Douglass	5 00
“ Ashbel Welsh	10 00	“ Fisher Hazard	5 00
“ Thomas Carr	5 25	“ N D Cortright	5 00
“ Individuals	16 25	“ J H Salkeld	5 00
	34 97	“ Packer & Co	5 00
Point Pleasant Bap ch	3 50	“ Individuals	19 50
Catasauqua 1st Pres ch	11 67	“ Collections	8 75
“ Old Sch do	3 00		58 25
“ Germans and others	5 54	Allentown	12 85
	20 21	Summit Hill	29 50
Bethlehem M E ch	3 09	New Hope	6 92
“ Luth ch	4 30	Lahaska	75
“ Moravian ch	17 40	Hazleton	30 50
	24 79	Jeansville	51 00
Whitehaven M E ch	7 88	Missionary box	1 55
W Smithfield Pres ch	5 25	Catawissa	5 17
Shawnee Pres ch	1 75	Bushkill	2 50
“ M E ch	1 44	Marshall Creek	1 00
	3 19	Sunbury	10 94
		Huntington, Luzerne Co	4 75

Berwick	11 22
Northumberland	2 75
Beach Haven	5 00
Wilkesbarre	61 65
Miss Hunter and Missionary box	83
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	\$1313 41

CITY COLLECTIONS.

John A Brown	\$100
George H Stuart	50
C E Spangler	25
Wm Brown	25
Barcroft, Beaver & Co	20
D Lapsley	20
Raiguel & Co	20
J McArthur	15
Atwood & Co	15
M W Baldwin	15
	<hr/>
	\$305

S H Perkins, Hoskins, Hieskill & Co, F F Backus, H J Williams, A Fullerton, W A Porter, C Robb, S & W Welsh, R Henderson, J W Paul, Jno Gulliver, Thomas Wattson, Sam Sloan, J S Kneeder, William Bucknell, Tredick, Stokes & Co, Williamson, Taylor & Co, J B, Hacker, Lea & Co, G W Toland, Mrs Rev J Chambers, A Robertson, Worrell, Coates & Co. each \$10. 230

Mrs Dr Stewart, Charles Santee, Chas Neff, Jas Wray, Joseph H Dulles, J M Harper, J C Davies, John McClure, J S McMullin, Chas Abbey, T E Harper, Wm Goodrich, Jno A Lewis, E Dunbar, A J Gallagher, H J Riehle, D Luther, Mrs M G Hay, S Grant, Miss H R Earp, R Creighton, W H Richards, R Lindsay, S B Linnard, D W Prescott, W F Geddes, G A Reichard, J J Burke, Jas Bayard, A R Perkins, W Clark, Mrs W Brown, Amb White, J R Campbell, R C Dale, Jas Murphy, Miss Rose and Mrs Main, Mrs R H Rose, C B Penrose, Saml Grant, R Clark, Rev R Adair, Thos Potter, James Field, J B M. R K Hoeflick, E Greble, C L Hughes, J L Linton, W P, E S Whelen, W R Lejee, G R Kellogg, J Walton, R K Stewart, A McIntire, Bunn, Raiguel & Co, W S Robarts, Morris

Patterson, R S Clark, D C Mc-	
Cammon, F J D, J W Claghorn,	
F V Krug, Saml Work, George	
Young, Jno Garrett, A Whilldin,	
Fales, Lathrop & Co, G H Wood-	
ward, M Johnson, C P Bayard,	
M, Miss H Holland, J B R, Paul	
T Jones, J R Rue, J K Law,	
Thos Hill and P J Patton, Chas	
Harkness, I S Williams, John	
Constable, Ann Hertzog, G B	
Reese, M Reed, E Printer, G F	
D, W E Dubois, Mrs E Heyl,	
S C Huey, J C Farr, Jas Bruen,	
E M Lewis, S A Mercer, G E	
Taylor, C Lehman, J R Dick-	
son, Jos Parker, J S, B Silvis,	
A H J, J W, Mrs M A Gray,	
J H Southworth, G Combs,	
\$5 each, -	525 00
W Kirk, R L and Cash, S Tol-	
man, \$4 each, -	12 00
Friend, H C Blair, Wm H H, Mr	
and Mrs Allison. Dr N L Hat-	
field, H Styre, C Deal, \$3 each,	21 00
J C Chance, J B Stevenson, Mrs	
J Taylor, Mrs Thompson, Thos	
White, J Tolman, \$2 50 each,	15 00
A Powell, Jas Fraiser, Capt To-	
bey, W H Armstrong, Rufus	
Smith, C A Lindsay, O H Wil-	
lard, Mrs Elmaker, Fox, \$2 each,	18 00
J Berry, J A Jordan, M A Hall,	
E Crowell, Dr Jones, J G, T	
Craig, Mrs Yarnall, J Andrews,	
D—, W McCammon, P—, Rev	
Ladd, J Johnson, Friend, 1 each,	15 00
Cash	61 40
1st Ref Pres ch	43 95
Rev Luther Albert, by his ch	10 00
2d Ref Pres ch	6 50
Nazareth M E ch	5 40
Miss Soc 1st Ind ch and collec	40 80
Ebenezer M E ch	12 85
Germantown M E ch	20 51
" Market Square ch	15 59
" Pres ch	32 67
" Pres ch, Rev Mr Knox	5 00
Kensington 1st Pres ch	33 30
Second Pres ch, per Dr D	20 00
Manayunk Ebenezer M E ch	2 70
" Individuals	3 30
M E Union ch in pt	35 36
Kensington M E ch	11 35
12th Bap ch	3 70
Epiphany ch	45 00
3d Ass Ref ch	3 58
	<hr/>
	\$1553 96

*Philadelphia Sabbath Association, in account with*M. BUEHLER, *Treasurer.*

DR.

To cash paid

<i>General Agent</i> , Rev. J. Miller,	}	Salaries.	\$2121 15
<i>Missionaries</i> , Rev. Wm. Hance,			
“ Rev. Septimus Bacon,			
“ Mr. Robert Gamble,			
“ Mr. Wm. McElwee,			
“ Mr. Wm. Alcorn,	}		
“ Mr. Wm. Thompson,			
To same for Travelling Expenses,			428 76
“ Printing Reports, Tracts, etc.,			199 49
“ Balance in Treasury,			1004 00
			<hr/>
			\$3753 40


CR.


By Balance from last Report,	\$886 03
“ Subscriptions and Donations in Philadelphia,	1553 96
“ “ “ “ other parts of Penna.,	1313 41
	<hr/>
	\$3753 40

February 15th, 1856.

Audited and found correct,

C. E. SPANGLER, } Committee.
 JOHN SPARHAWK, }

 The principle of this Society is to keep *entirely free from debt*. Hence the high importance of a Treasury *well replenished*, in order to give efficiency to our efforts.

 Donations may be sent to Mr. MARTIN BUEHLER, Treasurer of this Association, No. 195 Market Street, or to the Rev. JEREMIAH MILLER, General Agent of the Society, care of Wilfred Hall, Esq., Corresponding Secretary, at the Bible House, N. W. Corner of Walnut and Seventh Sts., Philadelphia.